

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 55

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to recognize Clifford Kirk on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, this body is honored to recognize those coaches throughout the State who have spent years in unflagging pursuits of victory and inspiring a countless number of Tennessee's students to succeed, both on and off the playing field; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable coach is Clifford Kirk, who over the past twenty-six years has established himself as the best high school softball coach in Tennessee history in the eyes of countless fans of the sport across the state and the nation; and

WHEREAS, with the recent announcement of his retirement from his coaching position at Soddy-Daisy High School, Clifford Kirk's storied coaching career may never be rivaled, as his teams compiled an amazing record of ten Class AAA state championships and thirteen state finals appearances in twenty-six seasons; and

WHEREAS, with a career win-loss record of 912-196, Coach Kirk has never had a losing season and enjoyed national recognition with perhaps his best team ever in 2010, the year Soddy-Daisy received fourth and fifth place national poll rankings while posting a season record of 52-2; and

WHEREAS, renowned for his team's hard play and sound fundamentals, Clifford Kirk has a love for softball which began in the late 1950s, when he first played fastpitch softball while serving in the U.S. Army and was stationed in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, continuing to play through the early 1960s, he began his coaching career in the summer ball league in the 1970s; he coached travel ball in the summers, guiding two teams to National Softball Association World Series championships; and

WHEREAS, Coach Kirk then began his high school coaching career as an assistant at Lookout Valley, where he worked for two years before taking over the head job at Hixson High School in 1987; and

WHEREAS, in his first season at Hixson, Coach Kirk took the competition by storm as he led the team to a state championship victory, a feat he repeated the very next year in 1988; and

WHEREAS, less than three years later, in 1991, he would take Soddy-Daisy to a state championship and see the team go on to claim back to back state titles in 1999-2000, win five state titles in a row from 2003 to 2007, and complete a three-year sweep from 2010 to 2012; and

WHEREAS, lauded for his teams' success on the diamond, Coach Kirk is especially proud of his players' success in the classroom and as citizens of their community; and

WHEREAS, though he has accumulated a multitude of awards and accolades, the honor that will extend his legacy for generations yet to come is the naming of the Soddy-Daisy home field as Clifford Kirk Stadium in an appropriate tribute to his years of exemplary dedication and leadership on the softball diamond; and

WHEREAS, his passion for teaching and for coaching is evident in his prestigious record of success, and he exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Coach Kirk has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his colleagues and his players; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we congratulate Clifford Kirk on the occasion of his retirement, fondly looking back over the many successful years he spent as a softball coach at Soddy-Daisy High School and extending to him our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.